

Orebanks
South side of Cold
Bottom Rd. near
Yeoho Rd, Sparks
Not accessible
Pre-1818

This is a house of slow growth. Originally part of Cold Bottom which John Ensor, Sr. patented in 1792, the log portion was probably built by a son, Abraham, as is indicated by the 1818 Baltimore County tax assessment. Numerous additions were made as the family prospered. One in particular is the stone west wing with its datestone indicating that John Hunter Ensor erected it in 1881. The name Orebanks derives from early mining operations on the property. The survival of such an early log dwelling is exceedingly rare.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Orebanks

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

South side of Cold Bottom Road near Yeoho Road

CITY, TOWN

Sparks

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

___ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

___ STRUCTURE

___ SITE

___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

___ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___ IN PROCESS

___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

___ UNOCCUPIED

___ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

___ YES: RESTRICTED

___ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☒ NO

PRESENT USE

___ AGRICULTURE

___ MUSEUM

___ COMMERCIAL

___ PARK

___ EDUCATIONAL

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___ ENTERTAINMENT

___ RELIGIOUS

___ GOVERNMENT

___ SCIENTIFIC

___ INDUSTRIAL

___ TRANSPORTATION

___ MILITARY

___ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John B. Merryman

Telephone #: 771-4624

STREET & NUMBER

Cold Bottom Road

CITY, TOWN

Sparks

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Md. 21152

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #: 1528

Folio #: 381

STREET & NUMBER

Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

___EXCELLENT
 XGOOD
 ___FAIR

___DETERIORATED
 ___RUINS
 ___UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

___UNALTERED
 XALTERED

CHECK ONE

XORIGINAL SITE
 ___MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Orebanks is a two storey house six bays in length, its principal facade to the east, with a two storey wing extending three bays in length from its south end. The southerly three bays of the main house are of log construction, covered with stucco, while the northerly three bays are of stuccoed stone; the rear or west wing is of stone.

The log section measures approximately 19 by 24 feet; the stone addition to the north measures approximately 19 by $31\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The log section is probably the earliest, dating from the very early 19th century. The stone north wing probably dates from 1820-1840; the stone rear or west wing dates from the late 19th century. The log and the earlier ~~stone~~ section each have four walls, thus confusing obvious evidence normally used in identifying the earlier section; the ~~stone~~ rear or west wing has but three walls, the typical condition for later additions. One explanation of both sections' having four walls is the possibility that the log section was but one storey in height, raised to its present two after the stone section was built. Half of a studded gable wall in the attic above the log section's north wall (between the two sections) retains weathered tongue-and-groove horizontal siding, its north side exposed, denying this theory; on the other hand, the rafters of the stone section are half-lapped and pegged at the ridge, an early method of joinery, while the rafters of the log section are mitered at the ridge, generally considered to be a later method of joinery. Nails associated with the framed gable are cut. On their principal (east) fronts, the first storey walls of the log and stone sections are flush while in the second storey, the log section's wall is several inches forward of the stone's, indicating the possible difference in time between the two storeys of the log section.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES	Unknown	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Unknown
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house is known as Orebanks because of the mining operations which once took place on the property. Originally part of Cold Bottom which John Ensor, Sr. patented in 1792, the dwelling was probably built during the second decade of the 19th century. It does not appear on the 1798 Federal Direct tax, but the 1818 Baltimore County Assessment includes improvements here in the name of Abraham Ensor, a son of John, Sr.

Remaining in the Ensor family until 1947, this was a house of slow growth. There is a datestone marked "JHE 1881" (John Hunter Ensor) on the stone west wing. The preservation and incorporation of the early log section into the growing dwelling is indeed rare. The present owners operate a cattle and horse farm here.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Baltimore County Tax Assessments: 1818, 1823.

Will of John Ensor, Sr.: Will Liber 14 folio 26 etc. (1831). Hall of Records, Annapolis.

Will of John Ensor. Will Liber 15 folio 337. (1835). Hall of Records, Annapolis.

Judicial Liber 134, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 194 A

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Catharine F. Black and James T. Wollon, Jr. AIA

ORGANIZATION

For Valleys Historical District Project

DATE

Nov. 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1114 Bellemore Road

TELEPHONE

323-3798

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

Continuation Sheet #1

Question #7 Description, Continued

All the windows of the principal (east) front and the rear wing are 2/2, flanked by louvred blinds, but west windows are 6/6. The principal entrance is in the southerly bay of the stone section but a secondary entrance is in the middle bay of the log section as well. A gable, covered with fancy-butt wood shingles, is centered on the easterly roof slope and the south gable is similarly finished. Flush chimneys rise above each gable end, that of the west or rear gable being but a single flue.

Internally, the log section comprises a single room in the first storey, two in the second. East of the chimney breast is a built-in cupboard with a pair of taller doors above a pair of shorter ones, all with flat panels and ogee mouldings integral with stiles and rails; a modern cupboard to match occupies the space west of the chimney breast, replacing an enclosed winding stair. The architrave mantel is modern. Window architraves are beaded with cyma-reversa-with-astrigal backband. The stone section includes an entrance hall in its southerly bay with the principal stair rising, with intermediate landings, to the second floor. Its round rail terminates in a ball above the slim, turned lower newel. A single room is north of the hall, its mantel having round columns supporting a paneled frieze spanning between plain projecting end blocks. Window and door architraves have corner blocks and doors have two long raised panels with loose echinus mouldings.

The cellar extends beneath the log section only. A large fireplace, now closed, is in its south end, with an exterior entrance in the space east of the chimney. The first floor is supported by log joists. Immediately north of the cellar's north wall is another stone wall, the foundation for the stone section, the latter without a cellar.

The massive barn, standing northeast of the house has its ground storey built into the hillside, its easterly framed wall opening to grade with numerous doors and windows to the stalls within. The wood-framed tall upper or loft storey cantilevers

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

Continuation Sheet #2

Question #7 Description, Continued

over the east front of the lower storey for shelter; it is accessible through large doors on grade at the west.

A stone spring house stands some distance east of the house and barn, its gabled roof extending to the south, probably cantilevered over the spring and entry originally, but those areas are now enclosed within walls sheathed in vertical boards. Small openings, now void of enclosure, are on the east and west side walls.